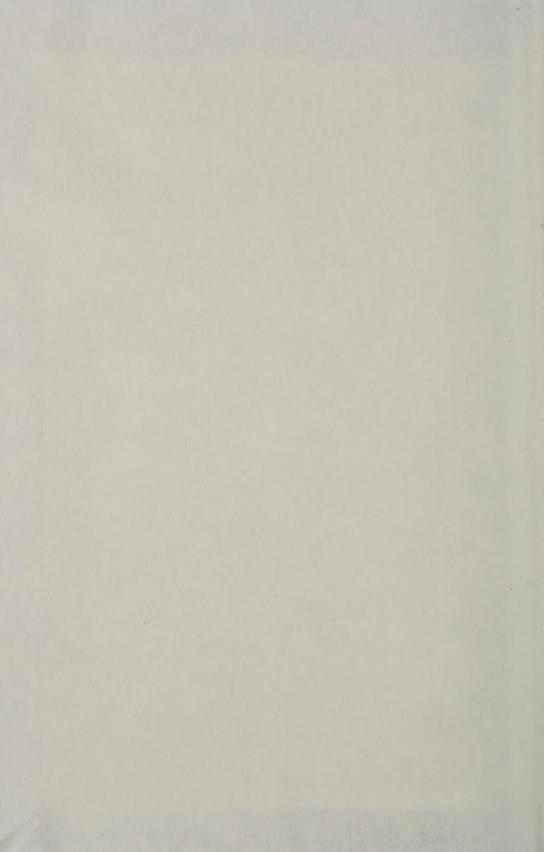
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The history of First Baptist Church of Lawrenceburg, Indiana, 1807-1857



THE FIRST BAPTIST CH

OF LAWRENCEBURG, INDIANA



1807

1957



COMMEMORATING

150 YEARS OF SERVICE

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THE CHURCH'S SESQUI-CENTENNIAL PROGRAM

During the week beginning November 3, 1957

THEME—By The Grace of God

| HYMN-O God, Our Help in Ages Past |
|--|
| SUNDAY |
| Morning Sermon by Rev. G. C. Mitchell, The Church's 20th Pastor10:30 A.M |
| Evening Sermon by Rev. E. P. Quinton, The Church's 29th Pastor and Worship In Music by the Choir of the Aurora Baptist Church 7:00 P.M |
| MONDAY |
| Organ Recital by Elvera Thompson, Organist, Christ Church, Cincinnati |
| WEDNESDAY |
| Communion Services led by Rev. W. F. Brosend, The Church's 31st Pastor |
| FRIDAY |
| Church Fellowship Supper with Speakers, Rev. R. K. Rea, The Church's 30th Pastor, and Rev. C. W. Townsend, The Church's 27th Pastor |
| SUNDAY |
| Morning Sermon by Dr. Dallas J. West, Executive Secretary, Indiana Baptist Convention10:30 A.M. |
| Historical Pageant of The Church, Directed by Mary F. Murray |

THIS booklet, the story of the Lawrenceburg Baptist Church on the occasion of its 150th Anniversary, was made possible by the contributions and assistance of many persons. To all of them, our most grateful appreciation! Among those who generously helped were: the Church Clerk Mrs. Elmer Murray, Mrs. Robert Marple, Mrs. Edward Randall for the cover design, Dr. G. H. O'Donnell, Editor of the Baptist Observer, Rev. E. Randall, Mr. E. B. Dinwiddie, and a number of other members. Other sources of information were also taken from the following: an account by Mrs. O. M. Keller, the Clerk's records, History of Dearborn and Ohio Counties by Weakley (1885), and History of Dearborn County, Indiana, by Shaw (1915).

R. L. PARKER, Editor

FOREWORD

The years bring their changes. Familiar names disappear and important occasions are nearly forgotten. In the busy life of a church, many servants of God make their contributions and then rest from their labors. Others take up the work of their Lord, building upon the foundations which had been laid.

Our church has a long and interesting record of Christian faithfulness. The words written in this history tell a story of courage and sacrifice which are characteristic of God's people in all places and in all ages.

By the grace of God much has been accomplished here with the passing of the years. The future holds its challenge and its promises. Men and women with vision, possessing a spiritual discernment and a love for Christ and His kingdom will, by the grace of God, lead this church to the fulfillment of its purpose in God's plan for the ages.

REVEREND E. RANDALL, Pastor

The First Baptist Church, Lawrenceburg, Indiana



THE CHURCH'S HISTORY The Beginning

Napoleon was still ruling Europe in 1807 and Thomas Jefferson was serving as the third President of the United States. In this year not far removed from the Revolutionary War, Aaron Burr was captured and brought to trial for his treasonous attempts to overthrow the young government. The year 1807 is also remembered as the one in which the first steamboat, designed by Robert Fulton, made its successful voyage from New York to Albany.

To a group of Christians then living in the village of Lawrenceburgh, Territory of Indiana — and thereafter to their spiritual descendants — the year 1807 was significant for yet another and more important reason. For it was in this year that the first church of any denomination was formally organized in the community — the First Baptist Church of Lawrenceburg. To the founders this achievement was hope become reality. To those who have since followed it was the endowment of a spiritual heritage. And to both it was an Almighty blessing providing a more effective means for worship, service and salvation.

Although the Lawrenceburg Church was not the first Baptist congregation to be organized in Indiana, it was definitely one of the earliest Baptist churches to be established in the state. The Silver Creek Baptist Church, near Sellersburg, and Little Cedar Creek Baptist Church, near Brookville, were founded prior to 1807, but both these congregations have since passed out of existence. It is doubtful that other Baptist groups were similarly formed before the Lawrenceburg Church, for it and the one at Madison now hold the distinction of being the two oldest Baptist congregations still operating in the State of Indiana. Both were founded in 1807 while Indiana was still a territory, some nine years before state-hood was attained.

The history of the First Baptist Church of Lawrenceburg is officially reckoned from its charter organization in 1807. Actually its beginning occurred more than a decade earlier when the first permanent settlers began moving into this part of the Northwest Territory. During this time when Dearborn County was being settled, the region was covered with forests; Indians were still a menace and wild beasts—such as deer, elk, bear, panthers and lynx—were common. It was truly a period of rugged pioneer living when the musket and axe were necessary to clear the land, build the cabins and maintain the homesteads. From the outset, we are told, the settlers were God-fearing people and among the first to settle in Lawrenceburgh Township were quite a number of Methodists and Old School Baptists.

In the beginning the people were not privileged to have either church buildings or resident pastors; however, classes and societies of the Baptist and Methodist denominations were organized from the start and various types of services, mostly under lay leadership, were held in the homes of the settlers. Also, several times a year an itinerant preacher or circuit rider would visit the settlements to conduct worship meetings and perform various other services of the clergy. Whenever a visiting minister arrived in the neighborhood, the whole countryside for miles around would turn out to hear him-and incidentally get acquainted with the newer immigrants. Baptisms at this time and for many years later were, of course, open-air affairs held at the nearest river or creek. Following these special services of the circuit rider, fellowship was enjoyed to the fullest. An invitation was usually extended the congregation to one of the settler's cabins for a dinner of deer meat and several hours of neighborly talk. Weddings, too, were often held during the traveling preacher's visit, even though it meant that the bride and groom couldn't always announce an exact date for their ceremony. However, this situation apparently was not counted as a problem in those days.

One of the earliest Baptist leaders in Dearborn County was Henry Hardin, a zealous pioneer layman. In 1801 he entered the land where Hardingsburg (now sometimes referred to as Hardingstown—near U. S. Route 50, less than 2 miles from Lawrenceburg's city limits) is now located. It has been said that the roof had hardly been laid on his log cabin until services were held in it. A frame house of worship was erected soon thereafter in Hardingsburg and was used jojintly by members of several denominations. Later still a brick church was built by the Baptists, but for various reasons the congregation dwindled until finally no members were left. The brick church was converted into a school house and later still it was used as a blacksmith shop. Part of this building is still standing at the intersection of U. S. 50 and the county road leading into Homestead.

Reverend Ezra Ferris, M.D.—he was a physician as well as a preacher —might well be called the Father of the First Baptist Church of Lawrenceburg, for it was under his guidance that the Baptists organized themselves into an official church body. Reverend Ferris moved to Lawrenceburg from Cincinnati and the Duck Creek Baptist Church in 1804. He was born in Connecticut in 1773, but moved westward with his father in 1789 to Columbia, Ohio. Columbia, located at the mouth of the Little Miami River, was established by the Ferris family and a few others as one of the earliest settlements in this region. It is now, of course, a part of the eastern section of the city of Cincinnati.

In about 1790 the first Protestant church in the Northwest Territory was organized at Columbia—in fact, this church, the Columbia Baptist

Church of Cincinnati, is still active. A few years after 1790, population changes made another church advisable; hence some of the members from Columbia formed the Duck Creek Baptist Church. Later still the Duck Creek Church relocated to the Hyde Park Section of Cincinnati, and has ever since been known as the Hyde Park Baptist Church.

During his youth, Ezra Ferris went back East for his education and graduated from the Philadelphia Medical College. He also became a zealous preacher and subsequently in 1801 returned to Cincinnati where he joined the Duck Creek Baptist Church. Three years later he moved to Lawrenceburg. His greatest concern seemed to be the building and strengthening of churches, and he preached wherever called by any struggling band of faithful members. He no sooner had become acquainted with his new surroundings than he went to work organizing the Baptist Church. Under the direction of Reverend Ferris, the widely-scattered membership was chartered in 1807 as the First Baptist Church of Lawrenceburg. In addition to the Ferrises, some of the other first families of the new church were the Blasdells living on Tanners Creek; Timothy Davis and Charles Brasher of Lawrenceburg; the Bonhams from near Elizabethtown, and the Hardins, Fromans, Townsends, Fosters, Fowlers and Bullocks of Hardinsburg.

Here then, by the Grace of God, was begun a church which now has served its people for 150 years in their quest for Divine guidance—during times of war and peace, at birth and death, during prosperity and depression, in floods and harvests, and amid all the other joys and sorrows that constantly beset mankind.

THE FIRST ONE HUNDRED YEARS

The Reverend Dr. Ezra Ferris continued as the congregation's first pastor for some 50 years, until his death in 1857. Reverend Ferris was known far and wide as a public-spirited man who had the welfare of his fellow man at heart. He helped organize the Laughery Baptist Association of churches in 1818. In addition to his pastoral duties, Reverend Ferris was also active in government affairs. He was a member of the first constitutional convention of Indiana held at Corydon; was several times elected to the State Legislature; and ran for Congress, but was defeated by 5 votes.

Besides the several homes in Lawrenceburg, other residences at Tanners Creek, Hardingsburg and Elizabethtown were used as places of worship for the church until 1830. In this year Lawrenceburg became the settled place for holding services; and \$300.00 was contributed by the Baptists toward the building of the Presbyterian Church, with the agreement that they could use the building on alternate Sundays or whenever



The First Church Building Erected in 1845

the Presbyterians weren't using it. Later this money was refunded to the Baptists when the plan of joint usage was discontinued.

In December 1837, the congregation began meeting in the Court House. During the following February, Trustees Ezra Ferris and E. P. Bond leased an upper room for a 10 year period. As part of the bargain, the trustees agreed to repair and fix the room for services while a committee for the town of Lawrenceburg reserved the right to use the room during the week as a school. It was also agreed that the school teacher was to sweep the room at the close of every week of school so it would be ready for services on Sunday. In August 1839, the Church authorized the trustees to secure and rent a room for the exclusive use of the Baptist congregation. The trustees were also empowered to procure glass lamps to light the room properly.

In 1843, a committee was appointed to see what could be done about building a church. In 1845, a lot was purchased on East Center Street for \$250.00, and a brick house of worship was erected on the site. (This building is still standing, being presently occupied by the Peerless Printing Company.) The new church building was financed entirely by free will offerings—"no socials, bazaars, benefit shows, tickets nor donations from outside sources were used."

The first church edifice of the Lawrenceburg Baptists was rectangular in shape and had plain glass windows. Two large stoves were used to heat the building and seating accommodations were provided by straight-backed benches. A small reed organ was situated in the right "Amen" corner of the one-roomed church. The first services were held in this building during October of 1845 although all the seats had not been completely installed. The need was met, however, by a supply of planks. The dedication sermon was delivered by Elder Sage of Cincinnati from the text, "Ye must be born again."

On April 19, 1857, the Church was saddened by the loss of Reverend Ferris. From the beginning until the time of his death, Dr. Ferris was regarded as senior pastor of the Church. Elder Mathews and William Steele from Kentucky were, for a period, assistant pastors to Ezra Ferris. The venerable Dr. Bond occasionally officiated prior to 1840, and in later years was made assistant pastor, occupying the pulpit for about one-half the time. In 1857 upon the death of Reverend Ferris, Dr. E. P. Bond became the second pastor of the Lawrenceburg Baptist Church and served as such until the close of the Civil War.

During the remainder of the 19th century the Church experienced a rather slow growth. In 1885, the membership numbered about 70 individuals. Meanwhile other denominations had been organized in Lawrenceburg, and by this time the following were established in addition to the Baptists: Methodists, Presbyterians, Disciples, Episcopalians, German Methodists, Lutherans and Roman Catholics.

In 1893, Mr. C. M. Stout was ordained a Baptist minister in Lawrenceburg, although he had been preaching here for the past 6 years. In 1897 one of the church's most beloved and faithful laymen, William H. Jones, was appointed deacon, an office which he held until his death in 1952.

During the 1890's church finances apparently became a problem. In 1893 the minutes of Dr. S. H. Collins, the Church Clerk, indicated that the Finance Committee was to solicit subscriptions of at least one cent per week for the current expenses of the Church. Later a question of dividing the pastor's time with the Rising Sun Church arose because of the inability to maintain the minister's salary of \$10.00 per week. The total indebtedness of the Church in 1898 was \$14.69, and the congregation authorized Reverend Fudge, the pastor at that time, to appeal to the State Convention for \$100.00 to help pay his salary. There was also the matter of an overdue gas bill which the congregation attempted to pay by appointing a committee to collect 10 cents from each member. An excerpt from the minutes of April 8, 1899 shows the following: "The Church as a body would gladly receive money taken in from socials given by members of

the church." This was seemingly a departure from previous church policy and in later years was revoked to conform with the practice of raising all church finances by tithes and offerings.

Near the turn of the century, the outlook of the church brightened under the leadership of the Reverend Mr. C. F. Dame. A new room was added to the front end of the Center Street building, bringing it flush with the sidewalk. This gave an additional room for prayer meetings and Sunday School classes, besides its use as a vestibule. Stained glass windows replaced the plain ones and the pulpit platform was extended to the right wall for use by the choir. A baptistry was also installed under the pulpit, so it was no longer necessary to depend upon the Ohio River for baptizing as had been done until this time. In addition, the trustees were authorized to hire a janitor for the church in 1900. Besides the cleaning chores, his main duties consisted of building fires in the two stoves and ringing the church bell—at a salary of not more than \$2.00 per month. A new organ was also installed in 1900 and the trustees were instructed to "dispose of the old organ and the box the new one came in."

A committee to collect for missions was appointed by Reverend Dame in April 1900. Although it is not known for certain that this was the first missionary effort by the Lawrenceburg Baptist Church, it is the earliest recorded incident of the congregation's concern for missions. It is quite possible, therefore, that this event is the foundation upon which the Lawrenceburg Church has been able to establish and maintain a noteworthy record of supporting Baptist missionaries and their work, both at home and on foreign fields.

Under Reverend Dame's leadership, further improvements were made to the church building in 1903. After the west wall of the building was found to be unsafe, it was replaced and an alcove was built at the rear of the church. A furnace providing an improved heating system was installed in the basement. New and more comfortable seats also replaced the old benches in the church's sanctuary. New gas lighting fixtures were purchased in Cincinnati by several of the lady members and a new pulpit was built.

Beginning on January 1, 1904, the church was again able to afford a full time pastor. Apparently since 1899, Reverend Dame had been serving the Rising Sun Baptist Church as well as the Lawrenceburg congregation.

The 100th Anniversary of the Lawrenceburg Baptist Church was celebrated on November 3, 1907. A Reverend Fulmar preached at both the morning and evening services, using the texts: "For me to live is Christ and to die is gain" and "Greater love has no man than this—that a man lay down his life for his friend." A report of the occasion also states that, "The Aurora Baptist Choir furnished excellent music in the evening to a large congregation."

A FEW OF THE SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASSES OF 1927



The Ladies' Bible Class



Girls' Class Taught by Mrs. John Norris



Girls' Class Taught by Mrs. Charles Gilbert and Mrs. Floyd Records



The Junior Boys' Class

THE NEXT THIRTY YEARS

In 1913 the church, along with all the other buildings and homes in Lawrenceburg, was inundated by one of the worst Ohio River floods yet experienced. After the waters receded, the church building was almost ready to collapse and the floors were severely buckled, to say nothing of the mud-stained and water-soaked equipment which had been ruined by the flood. With determination and hard work, however, the congregation, under the leadership of Reverend G. C. Mitchell, not only had the damage repaired, but also took the opportunity to improve the building's facilities. A new and larger basement was dug and adequate foundation posts were installed to support the main floor. A new steam heating plant was installed, and the basement area was remodeled so that additional Sunday School rooms were thus provided.

After the 1913 flood, the church continued to make progress in the Lord's work as it had in the decade or so before. On July 4, 1915 an Annual Meeting and Homecoming was held with a roll call of all members. This date closed the first year of Reverend Bowman's pastorate in Lawrenceburg. Reports revealed that 70 new members had been added within the year and that an indebtedness of \$500.00 had been reduced to approximately one-half that amount. Attendance at prayer meetings had averaged 70 since the preceding November when a successful revival had been conducted by Reverend Averitt and his wife of St. Matthews, Kentucky.

In 1917, having received a request for aid in the building program of the Baptist Church in Petersburg, Kentucky, the Lawrenceburg Baptists donated them a communion set which had been replaced with a newer service.

At the close of World War I, no church business meetings were held during November and December of 1918, "owing to the influenza epidemic."

The congregation voted to undertake a 4 week Daily Vacation Bible School under the leadership of Reverend Curtis in 1923. The Summer Vacation Bible School has since become an annual program at Lawrence-burg, providing through the years one of the most beneficial means of youth training the church offers. This has also been an effective program for reaching and serving other children in the community as well as those of Baptist parentage.

In 1926 the Church had an annual budget of \$3,000.00 of which the following were major items: pastor's salary \$1,500; missions \$700; parsonage payments \$364; janitor's salary \$60; insurance \$20; and coal \$75.

By 1929 the church had a resident membership of 193. In this same year, the first, and up to this writing the only, member of the Lawrence-burg Baptists entered full-time service as a missionary. Miss Janet Aylor after having attended Carson Newman College, departed for San Juan, Puerto Rico, where she labored as a pastor's assistant during the next 3 years.

In 1933, the Lawrenceburg Church joined with other Baptist Churches in the state to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the Indiana Baptist Convention, by participating in a state-wide evangelistic program. The 30's were active years for the church under the able pastorship of Reverend J. Walker Martin. Attendance was on the increase and a good spiritual tone prevailed. Junior, intermediate and senior B.Y.P.U.'s, forerunners of our present B.Y.F. programs, were functioning quite actively. A junior choir had also been formed and was providing special music at various services. Furthermore, a new arrangement was adopted for the administration of the church's finances by a Finance Committee composed of the pastor, financial secretary, treasurer, a deacon and one member-at-large.

The nucleus of a building fund, to provide some much-needed additional Sunday School rooms, was initiated during the Christmas Season of 1934. At Reverend Martin's suggestion, cottage prayer meetings were held to introduce and to prepare for a service of "Glorified Giving" on December 23. On this evening the membership brought personal gifts of money to celebrate the Christ Child's birth. A sum of almost \$250.00 was thus raised for the building fund. A few months later planning was begun for the construction of a separate 2 story Sunday School building. This new building was to be located across from the church on the opposite side of Center Street. By the time the 1937 flood struck Lawrenceburg, some of the initial construction work for this building had already been started. Because of the flood and subsequent relocation of the church, however, this Sunday School building was not completed.



Interior of the Center Street Church in 1936, After A New Pipe Organ Had Been Installed

With no possible knowledge of the impending disaster which was to strike them in a few months, the church purchased a new pipe organ and decorated the sanctuary with velvet draperies, a new carpet and new lighting fixtures in 1936. This undertaking was made possible by a legacy

of \$500.00 then left to the church by the March family. By adding to this amount, the congregation was able to complete this work by October 16th when a joyous and grateful service of dedication was held.

Three months later all the church's furnishings were destroyed and the building itself severely damaged. The 1937 flood, the most destructive natural calamity ever to occur in this region, wrecked havoc in all of Lawrenceburg. The effects were worse than in numerous other river towns, because the population was given no time to remove their belongings to safety when the town's levee gave way to the water's force and the entire community was rapidly flooded by the Ohio River. All but 10 families of the membership lost practically everything they owned. Of the church's equipment, only the organ chimes and the communion table, which had to be refinished by the manufacturer, were worth salvaging.

From January 13 to April 27 in 1937, no church business meetings were held because of the drastic flood conditions which prevailed. Worship services, however, were conducted in the old Overall Factory and in the Town Hall Building at Greendale. Later the congregation met with the Presbyterians until they could scrub away the mud and remove the debris from their own church. Regular services were then resumed in the Center Street house of worship which by now was literally a shell of its former self.

Photo Taken At The Last Service To Be Held in the Flood-damaged Church on Center Street in 1938



By the grace of God, however, what indeed had been a tragic blow for the Lawrenceburg Baptist Church, actually became an impetus for a new victory. At a special called meeting in the home of Miss Ruth Kirtley a vote was taken by secret ballot on the following motion: "We the people of the Lawrenceburg Baptist Church in called business meeting, April 21, 1937, hereby agree and express our willingness and purpose to move our church location to Greendale when and if financial assistance is sufficient to assure the success of the undertaking and is forthcoming from denominational sources." The vote was unanimous. Thus it was decided to relocate and to build a completely new church and Sunday School plant in the section of Greendale, rather than to make the extensive repairs to rehabilitate the Center Street structure, which now had felt the fury of 2 major floods. A site in Greendale would afford protection against similar damages in the future because of the higher elevation. Moreover local population shifts were occurring in that direction; and, as anticipated, Greendale grew rapidly during the ensuing years, with the majority of new homes in the locality being constructed there. This trend, of course, gave the Baptist Church an opportunity for further extending its outreach of service in the community.

A period of planning, organizing and laboring was then begun to accomplish the relocation and rebuilding project. A Building Committee, with the pastor acting as Chairman, was appointed. The church, at the request of the Indiana Baptist Convention, also released Reverend Martin for 3 months to aid in a flood relief campaign for the stricken Baptist Churches of Indiana. In May, the congregation agreed upon a building site located on Tebbs Avenue in Greendale. In July, a grant of \$7,000.00 and a loan of \$5,000.00 was accepted from the Baptist Home Mission Society, the grant being secured by a contingent mortgage on the church property but not payable as long as the church would function as a Baptist Church in the American Baptist Convention. In November, the prime contract for the new building was awarded to Jellin and Sons of Cincinnati, whose bid was in the amount of \$15,600.00. Construction work was begun soon thereafter in the same month. Proceeding according to the plans specified by the architect, Mr. F. W. Bertsch of Indianapolis, work on the new church building continued during the remainder of the year and until its completion in 1938.





The Sanctuary and Chancel

The Narthex

Two Interior Views of the New Church in Greendale in 1938

THE LAST TWENTY YEARS

1938

Construction of the church in Greendale was completed early in June. Built of native stone in English provincial architecture, the structure, through its unusual beauty and dignity, truly provided an inspirational setting for the Lord's worship. The June dedication service was a memorable event for the Lawrenceburg Baptists. For in little more than one year's time, they had—by the Grace of God— overcome the despair of a major catastrophe and now were able to visualize an even greater service with the completely new and relocated house of worship.

The first services actually to be held in the new church were not those of dedication, but the funeral of Mrs. Ruth Dwyer Elkins, who was fatally injured while making preparations for traveling to Lawrenceburg to attend the dedication program.

The problem of transporting many of the downtown people to and from the Sunday services was met by the hiring of a school bus and its driver expressly for this purpose.

According to the clerk's annual report for the year ending April 30th—almost one year after the church's relocation—52 new members had been received into the church. Sunday School attendance had averaged 167 during the same period.

The choir of the Walnut Street Baptist Church of Muncie presented several musical arrangements during an Anniversary Vesper program held in June.



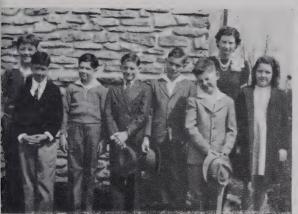
Rev. J. Walker Martin

1941

All-day services were held on February 16, as members of the church and friends throughout the community paid tribute to Reverend J. Walker Martin, who after 8 years of serving the Lawrenceburg congregation had now accepted a call to the Foster Park Church in Chicago. In addition to his farewell sermon on this date, Reverend Martin also led in ordination rites for the following 5 members elected to the office of deacon: Charles Gilbert, M. V. Heath, Francis Ratliff, John Norris and Edward Knoebel, Jr. Following the closing service in the evening, the Church Moderator, Francis Ratliff, on behalf of the church paid high tribute to

Reverend Martin's work, and in token of the affection and esteem of the members, presented Reverend and Mrs. Martin with a silver tea service.

Rev. E. P. Quinton was called to serve here in April, and so began the first year of his pastorate in Lawrenceburg. At this time the total membership numbered 333, with 279 being resident members.



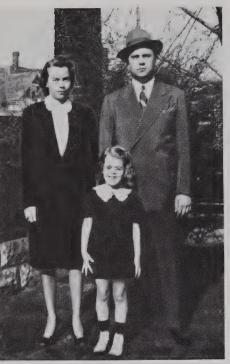
1941 Second Year Junior Sunday School Class Taught by Mary F. Murray



1941 Third Year Junior Sunday School Class Taught by Mrs. Robbins

At the January business meeting, the deacon's recommendation that the church support the Ministers and Missionaries Retirement Plan, with regular contributions as required, was approved.

As the year proceeded and the gravity of World War II increased, the church was again (for the sixth time in its history) faced with the unusual problems which occur when a nation engages in war. Many of the members were mobilized into the armed forces. This necessitated the replacement of those who had been church officers and teachers, as well as a ministry from the home church to all those members now in army camps, aboard naval vessels and serving elsewhere in the conflict. With the rationing of gas, limited transportation to the church necessitated the curtailing of mid-week services. The church also deemed it necessary to invest in a \$22,000 war risk insurance policy for the duration of the emergency. There were other measures and services too—unrecorded, but nevertheless undertaken—by the church for its people and their Lord during these troubled times.



Rev. E. P. Quinton and Family

At the beginning of the year, the number of deacons was increased by two and a rotating plan was adopted whereby, at the expiration of a deacon's 3 year term of office, he would be ineligible for reelection until the following year. At the same time Mr. William H. Jones and Mr. Charles Gilbert were honored as senior deacons and elected as such for life. In May, the following three members were chosen as additional deacons and duly ordained to this office: Raymond Fox, Lloyd Sheets and Aaron Elliott.

A 37 foot lot adjoining the church's property on the eastern boundary was purchased from the Tebbs family.

Because of the restrictions imposed by wartime conditions, the annual meeting of the Indiana Baptist Convention was not held this year. Instead, World Parish Day was observed in various Indiana Baptist Churches, including Lawrenceburg, on Sunday, October 4.

1944

Boy Scout Troop 6, sponsored by the church, was organized and chartered by the Boy Scouts of America on May 10th. Fred Harmon was chosen as the first Scoutmaster. Although the church had attempted to organize a troop several times in the past, this marked the establishment of its first successful scouting unit.

Reverend E. P. Quinton resigned, effective April 15, to become State Director of Religious Education in Illinois.

A committee, which had originally been appointed during the previous year, presented a new constitution for the church's approval during the April business meeting. With but one amendment—in regard to the number of members for a quorum to transact the church's business — the new constitution was adopted. Copies of the constitution were subsequently published in booklet form for use by the members. This constitution, incidentally, is



The Lighting of Candles for Members in World War II, At Services Held in January 1945

still in effect, although a committee has since been appointed to study and recommend both new and revised provisions as they deem necessary.

Reverend Royden Rea, from Greenwood, Indiana, was called as the church's new pastor in June. Soon thereafter the church sought to increase its effectiveness by the following means: the adoption of the Northern Baptist Convention's 6 point plan for the World Crusade Program; having various groups from the church and Sunday School present the devotional periods of the Sunday evening services; the resumption of mid-week prayer meetings at the church; and, a bond drive to be conducted by the Finance Committee to increase the building fund.

In September, the church contributed \$5.00 to the Northern Baptist Convention to aid with the Convention's project of establishing a national Baptist Assembly Ground at Green Lake, Wisconsin.

When hostilities finally ended in Europe, the church held a special worship service to commemorate the restoration of peace in that part of the world.

A Sunday of Sacrifice service near the end of the year launched the church's participation in the World Crusade. Undertaken on a national level, the objects of this Baptist Program were the offering of aid to reestablish war-torn churches and to increase missionary outreach to people the world over, as well as emphasizing the following phases of the church's work: evangelism, Christian education, social righteousness, stewardship, and a ministry for returning servicemen.



Rev. Royden Rea

During March, the present parsonage and its property was purchased for \$12,000.00 from Mr. and Mrs. Carl Smith. Now the church was once again in the position of owning and operating its own minister's residence. Since the 1937 flood when the former church parsonage on Elm Street has been so severely damaged that it was sold rather than repaired, it had been necessary for the pastor and his family to occupy rented quarters.

A bequest of \$1,000.00 was received in June from the estate of the late Ruth Dwyer Elkins. Since Mrs. Elkins and her father, Dr. Dwyer, had been actively interested in the church choir, the bequest was set aside and designated as a nucleus amount to be used for the future purchasing of a new organ.

On September 16, a board of directors from three local associations was organized for the purpose of establishing and directing a Baptist Youth Camp to serve the churches in this part of the state. Mary F. Kennedy of the Lawrenceburg church was elected secretary of the board. Largely through the efforts of this group, a site near Westport was purchased by the associations and later developed as the Southeastern Indiana Baptist Youth Camp.

The church constitution was amended in May to increase the number of trustees to 5, each to serve for 5 years but so grouped that one member would be elected annually.

In August, the church voted to proceed with a building program to provide some much-needed, additional Sunday School rooms.

1948

On June 20th, Mr. William H. Jones was honored by the church being presented with a watch in token of the congregation's gratitude for his 50 years of service as a deacon.

Revival meetings were conducted during the fall by Reverend King of Crawfordsville.

By November, the church's World Mission Crusade quota of \$4,634.70 had been exceeded by almost \$300.00. Accordingly, the church presented a letter of commendation to Miss Ruth Kirtley for her outstanding work as the local Chairman of the Crusade.

A Cub Scout unit, sponsored by the church, was organized in December. Eighteen boys were registered, with Alvin Bockhorst acting as the Pack's first Cubmaster.

AT THE BAPTIST YOUTH CAMP



Elmer Murray and his 1948 Class in Front of the Dining Hall



Louise Cooper and her 1948 Cabin Girls, After Enjoying a Swim

A used school bus was purchased by the church in order to continue the transportation facilities from the downtown area for the Sunday Church services. This church-owned vehicle, which was driven by members Loren Elliott and Everett Teke, was used for approximately 3 years. Thereafter the bus was sold and the former arrangement of hiring transportation services was resumed.

Dr. Sam Hill of Georgetown College conducted a revival program for the church during October.

In November, the structural contract for building the basement portion of the new Sunday School Annex was awarded to Daugherty and Rowe Construction Company for the amount of \$14,765.00. The total cost of completing this project, including a new gas heating system for the entire church building and annex, was \$21,282.00. Work proceeded on the new building during the winter months and continued until its completion in 1950.

Boy Scout Troop 6 as They Appeared in May 1949



Following the completion of the new Sunday School Annex basement, a dedication service was held on Sunday, June 4th. This addition, providing 7 new Sunday School rooms and a church kitchen, was so constructed that future expansion would be facilitated on the upper levels of the same foundation. The total value of the church's property at this time was placed at \$62,282.00, and resident membership numbered 454.

In August, the church adopted a new plan of the American Baptist Convention whereby two major mission offerings, in addition to regular mission giving, were to be received annually—one in the spring for home missions and one in the fall for foreign work.

A senior scout unit was chartered on September 18, thus completing the final phase of the entire scouting program as sponsored by the church. The Lawrenceburg Baptist Church now had the distinction of being the only church, as well as one of the first institutions, in this part of the state to sponsor a cub pack, a scout troop and an explorer post. Mr. Curtis Lischkge was selected as the adult leader of the new senior scout organization.

Reverend George Hurt led the revival services held during the latter part of October.

1951

After spending more than five and one-half years as a truly dedicated leader of the Lawrenceburg Baptists, Reverend Royden Rea resigned his pastorate here, effective February 11th, to become the minister of the Linton Baptist Church. Reverend W. Frank Brosend of Austin was called as the church's next pastor and began his ministry in Lawrenceburg on April 8th.

In May, extensive repairs and remodeling work were performed at the parsonage. The pastor's study in the church was also refurnished with several new pieces of office equipment and telephone service was installed.

Provisions were initiated during the summer for a church nursery, which was used—and still is—by the congregation's babies and younger children during the Sunday morning worship services.

For the second consecutive year, Reverend George Hurt led the church's revival services.



Rev. W. Frank Brosend

A new \$6,000.00 pipe organ was purchased early in the year and replaced the orgatron which had been in use since the building of the church in Greendale. Dedication services were held on February 17th, with Roger Heather, Minister of Music at the North Presbyterian Church of Cincinnati, as guest organist.

A recommendation was approved in March for sending four members of the High School Class to a youth conference at the American Baptist Assembly at Green Lake, Wisconsin. Conference costs were paid by the church.

During July — and each summer thereafter — delegates from the Lawrenceburg Church participated in the outstanding Christian experiences afforded by the Green Lake Assembly. Kay Claibourn, Pal Priem, Bob Kern and Joyce Dinwiddie were selected as the church's first representatives to attend the Green Lake Youth Conferences.

At the April business meeting, it was reported that the deacons had completed a revision of the church rolls as provided for in the church constitution. As a result, 120 names were placed on an inactive list.

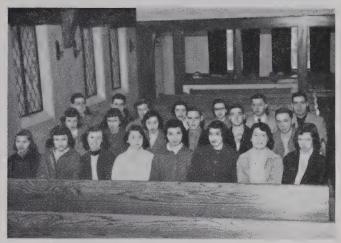
A \$500 bequest of the late Ruth Kirtley was received by the church in December and placed in the organ fund. A later sum of money given by the Schleicher family in memory of Miss Kirtley was used by the church to purchase a new pulpit Bible.

1953

A revival, preceding Holy Week, was held at the church with Reverend Gambrel of Erlanger, Kentucky, as evangelist.

Major church repairs and refurnishings accomplished during the following months included the following: a new carpet laid in the auditorium and narthex; new tile flooring laid in the vestibule and on the basement stairs; the church kitchen more completely equipped; and, copies of a new hymnal placed in the sanctuary for use during worship services.

The Lawrenceburg Church was host to the Laughery Association of Baptist Churches during their annual meeting held in August.



The High School Class in 1953—Pre-Easter Devotions Were Held Each Wednesday Morning At The Church Before School

In April, the church's senior deacon, M. Vern Heath, who had also served as a trustee and in various other capacities during the years, was voted honorary life membership on the Board of Deacons.

The clerk's annual report showed a total membership at this time of 579, of whom 372 were resident members; a total evaluation of all church property of \$106,000.00; a total expenditure by the church during the past year of \$18,936.15; and, an average Sunday School attendance of 194 for the year ending in April.

The church agreed to participate in the American Baptist Convention's program of Churches for New Frontiers—a home mission project to provide funds for building additional churches, critically needed by America's expanding and shifting population. It was reported that some 22 new churches were required in Indiana alone. The program's goal for churches in this state was set at \$600,000.00, with Lawrenceburg's share set at \$3,000.00 This quota was successfully reached through pledges paid by members during the following 20 months,



Choral Trio of Bernice Lischkge, Orpha Sykes and Doris Marple

Revival services were led by Reverend Pomeroy of Newark, Ohio, during the first week in March.

To conform with a new policy of both the state and national Baptist Conventions, the church altered the period of its fiscal year, so that henceforth each would begin in January rather than in May.

In May, a contribution from the church was forwarded to a community committe seeking revision of the Indiana marriage laws. A delegate from the membership was also appointed to represent the Baptists in this effort to prevent the many hasty, unsound marriages being exploited by the alleged matrimonial markets of Indiana.

A revised schedule of Sunday worship services was begun in June. Two morning services, one before and one following the Sunday School period, were held accordingly, and the evening services were discontinued. The regular schedule for Sunday worship was resumed thereafter each year in September.

A circle plan, as recommended by the American Baptist Convention, was adopted by the local woman's missionary societies for the first time. As a result, greater participation and interest was experienced by this organization which has always been a motivating force in the Lawrenceburg Baptist Church.

Reverend W. Frank Brosend, having answered a call to the Lebanon church, tendered his resignation effective September 11th. Reverend Matthews of Franklin College was secured for interim pastor, and acted as such until November. At that time, Reverend Edward Randall began his pastorate here. Before his ministry in Lawrenceburg, Reverend Randall, a native of Jeffersonville, had served the Mt. Moriah Baptist Church at Adams, Indiana.



Rev. Edward Randall, Jr.

During February, a church census was taken of Greendale, Lawrenceburg and the surrounding territory serviced by the church.

A deputation team from the Baptist Student Foundation of Purdue University presented an outstanding program to the church during its annual youth week observances in February.

A building committee was appointed in February, with Raymond Fox as chairman. During the year, plans were made by this group to finance and to finish completely the two story annex over the basement rooms constructed in 1950. This undertaking will provide an enlarged sanctuary, additional Sunday School rooms and permit adequate usage of basement areas for fellowship and recreational purposes—all being critically needed for the church to function effectively. The new annex will be in keeping with the present church's architectural style and constructed according to the plans of the original building's architect.

During the spring, the practice of hiring part-time secretarial help for the church office was initiated.

The following members were ordained to the office of deacon during services conducted on July 1st: Elmer Murray, Lester Etter, Edwin Dinwiddie and Robert Parker.

Marjorie Cooper of the Lawrenceburg Church was selected as the first recipient of the \$250.00 Franklin College scholarship now awarded annually by the Men's Brotherhood of the Laughery Association.



The 1956 Nursery Class Taught by Louise Cooper and Jewel Greer



The 1956 Beginner Class Taught by Esther Coleman, Lena Wittrock and Martha Ryle

A complete B.Y.F. program for primary, junior, junior high and high school groups was successfully reactivated. By the end of the year, average attendance numbered 44. The keen interest in this program was evidenced by the local group's winning the attendance banner at 9 of the 12 associational meetings held.

After a lapse of several years, the youth choir was re-organized with Robert Marple as director and Bernice Lischkge as accompanist. Composed of young people from the fourth through the eighth grades, the youth choir sang during numerous Sunday evening worship services; thus adding immeasureably to the ministry of music within the church.

A revival held during the fall was led by Reverend A. M. Damaske of the Baptist Church at Lakeside, Arizona.

At the November business meeting, the church extended an expression of gratitude to Mina Rupp and Ruth Gilbert, both of whom were retiring from church financial positions after having served faithfully for many years. Miss Rupp had been church treasurer for more than 23 years, while Miss Gilbert had served as financial secretary since 1943.

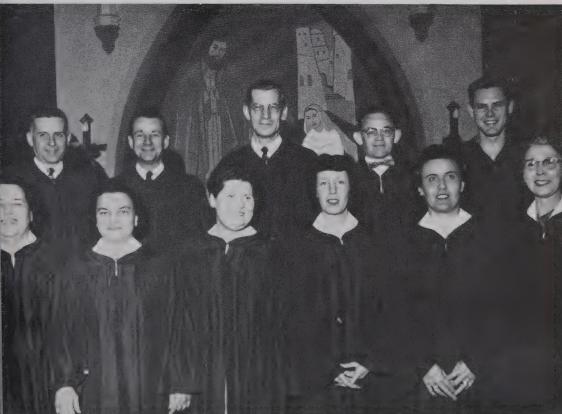
With approval of the state convention, one-half of Lawrenceburg's Annual America for Christ Offering was allotted to the new Dillsboro Baptist Church. Since this was the first Baptist Church organized in Laughery Association for some 53 years and since Reverend Randall and other local members had helped in this work, the Lawrenceburg Baptists took particular interest in the new congregation at Dillsboro.

A committee was appointed early in the year to plan and to arrange a program commemorating the church's 150th anniversary, to be observed in November.

In April, a ruling was adopted which stipulated that extra janitor fees would be charged for weddings held in the church sanctuary.

After having participated in a community daily vacation Bible School program for many years, the church organized and held its own Bible School during June. Having been attended by 133 young people, this year's 2 week Bible School was considered highly successful.

The 1956 Chancel Choir Directed By William B. Jones





Formation at the 1957 Daily Vacation Bible School

During the summer, the contract for the annex building was awarded to the Byram Building Company of Greendale. Construction work was begun in August, and is now proceeding according to plans. The stone for the building's exterior was donated by Mr. Irvin Blasdell—as he had also done for the main church building when it was erected in 1937-38. Various members of the church performed the work of handling and transporting the stone from Mr. Blasdell's farm on Salt Fork Creek to the building site. It is contemplated that the new building will be completed early in 1958. This project provides for enlargement of the sanctuary, 12 additional class rooms and other necessary utility rooms and spaces. A total cost of \$55,000.00 has been estimated for the entire expansion program, including equipment and furnishings.

In October, a junior choir for children from the second through the fourth grades was organized with Doris Marple as director.

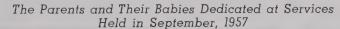
Construction Underway for Completion of Church Annex



THE FUTURE

At best, the foregoing account is only a glimpse or an indication of the complete story of the First Baptist Church of Lawrenceburg. For the ultimate history of any Christian church is, in reality, the story of its people and their relationship with God. Mostly, such experiences go unrecorded, except—as the writer of Revelations expressed it—in the Lamb's Book of Life. Nevertheless, what is known for sure of the church's past, with its spiritual peaks and valleys, is basis enough to furnish the present and future membership with a rich spiritual heritage. It is hoped that this fact will become more apparent through the observance of the church's sesquicentennial and through the presentation of this account.

What will the future hold for the Lawrenceburg Baptists? Who knows but God? We do know, however, that the church's future growth and service depend upon each member and upon his children's children, and upon their willingness to do the Father's will. Primarily it is this acceptance of the Saviour that is most important, and then a concern for the church as such. If the seeking of God comes first, there can be no doubt as to the future of the Lawrenceburg Baptist Church.





THE CHURCH'S PASTORS

| | Name | Dates of Pastorate |
|-----|---------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1. | Dr. Ezra Ferris | |
| | Dr. E. P. Bond | |
| 3. | Rev. Degamore | |
| 4. | Rev. Meeks | |
| 5. | Rev. Clancy | |
| 6. | Rev. Earl | |
| 7. | Rev. Hamline | |
| 8. | Rev. Swain | |
| 9. | Rev. Loving | |
| 10. | Rev. Tinker | |
| 11. | Rev. C. M. Stout | 1893 - March 1894 |
| 12. | Rev. Powell | October 1894 - July 5, 1895 |
| 13. | Rev. Roper | . March 5, 1896 - December 2, 1896 |
| 14. | Rev. Fudge | May 15, 1898 - June 4, 1899 |
| | | December 6, 1899 - April 1907 |
| 16. | Rev. Spinks | June 1907 - August 1909 |
| 17. | Rev. Pressley | October 13, 1909 - May 1910 |
| 18. | Rev. Booth | July 13, 1910 - January 1, 1911 |
| 19. | Rev. McGuire | June 21, 1911 - March 6, 1912 |
| | | April 17, 1912 - May 6, 1914 |
| | | July 1, 1914 - October 1917 |
| | | February 6, 1918 - May 1918 |
| | | June 19, 1918 - May 1920 |
| | | December 12, 1920 - June 10, 1923 |
| | | March 9, 1924 - October 30, 1925 |
| | | December 2, 1925 - July 1928 |
| | · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · | October 1928 - March 13, 1932 |
| | | October 1932 - February 16, 1941 |
| 29. | Rev. Everett P. Quinton | April 1941 - April 15, 1945 |
| | | June 1945 - February 11, 1951 |
| | | April 8, 1951 - September 11, 1955 |
| 32. | Rev. Edward Randall, Jr | November 6, 1955 - Present |

| | H'S FOUNDATION—"Built upon the foundation of the nd prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner ph. 2:20. |
|--------------------------|---|
| | H'S MESSAGE—"For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Lord: and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake." — 2 |
| baptizing t Holy Ghos | H'S MISSION—"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, hem in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the st: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have d you."—Matt. 28:19, 20. |
| is affiliated | CH'S AFFILIATION—The Lawrenceburg Baptist Church: Nationally, with the American Baptist Convention; State, adiana Baptist Convention; Locally, with the Laughery Bapation. |
| THE CHURC | H'S MEMBERSHIP—Present membership in 1957: |
| | nembers |
| | nt members |
| | embers |
| Total mem | bership611 |
| THE CHURC | H'S MEETINGS |
| Sundays | |
| 9:30 | Church School |
| 10:30 | Morning Worship |
| 6:00 | Senior, Jr. High, Junior and Primary B.Y.F. Deacon's meeting (Sunday prior to business meeting) |
| 7:00 | Evening Worship |
| Mondays | |
| 6:30 | Cub Scout (4th Monday) |
| 7:00 | Boy Scouts The state of Manday |
| 7.20 | Trustees Meeting (1st Monday) Mission Circles (3rd Monday) |
| 7:30 Tuesdays | Mission Cheles (3rd Monday) |
| 7:00 | Chancel Choir Rehearsal |
| Wednesda | |
| | Junior Choir Rehearsal |
| 6:30 | Youth Choir Rehearsal |
| 7:00 | |
| ,.00 | (1st Wednesday) |
| 7:30 | Mid-Week Service |
| | Business Meeting (2nd Wednesday) |
| Fridays | |
| 7:30 | Ladies Bible Class (last Friday) |

THE CHURCH'S BUDGET-1957

| GENERAL EXPENSES | |
|---|--|
| Miscellaneous | \$ 1,200.00 |
| Salary (Pastor) | . 3,900.00 |
| M & M Retirement | |
| Car Expenses (Pastor) | |
| Utilities (Church) | |
| Utilities (Parsonage) | |
| Insurance | |
| Transportation (Bus) | |
| Janitor | |
| Maintenance and Improvements | |
| Music | . 100.00 |
| Youth Work | . 300.00 |
| B.Y.F | |
| Supply Pastor | |
| Convention and State Travel Expenses | |
| Clerical Help | |
| MISSIONS Unified Missions Westport Camp Purdue University Franklin College Ball State Old People's Home (Zionsville) Baptist Extension (Laughery Assn.) | . 100.00 . 100.00 . 100.00 . 100.00 |
| | \$ 3,120.00 |
| BUILDING FUND | \$ 3,000.00 |
| | \$ 3,000.00 |
| TOTAL BUDGET | |
| General Expenses | \$11,630.00 |
| Missions | |
| Building Fund | |
| | \$17,750.00 |

THE CHURCH'S PRESENT OFFICERS, TEACHERS AND COMMITTEES

| Pastor | Rev. Edward Randall, Jr. |
|------------------------|--|
| Moderator | Mr. Robert Parker |
| Mr. M. V. Hea | Mr. Edwin Dinwiddie, Chairman ath, Mr. Charles Bethel, Mr. Aaron Elliot, Mr. Lloyd ward Knoebel, Mr. Robert Parker, Mr. Lester Etter, mray |
| | Mr. William B. Jones, Chairman tler, Mr. Howard McKee, Mr. Ernest Massey, Mr. Id |
| Clerk | Mrs. Elmer Murray |
| Financial Secretary . | Mr. Hubert Miller |
| Treasurer | |
| Organist | |
| | |
| Chancel Choir Director | orMr. William B. Jones |
| Youth Choir Director | rMr. Robert Marple |
| Junior Choir Director | rMrs. Robert Marple |
| | Mrs. Fred Buddenburg, Mrs. John Norris |
| Mrs. George | Crute, Mr. Louis Davis, Mr. George Brown, Mr. Mr. William B. Jones |
| | CommitteeMr. Walter Gates, Chairman Barlow, Mrs. F. Gibbs, Mrs. Harry Whitcomb, Mrs. |

THE CHURCH'S PRESENT OFFICERS, TEACHERS AND COMMITTEES (Cont'd)

| Women's Mission Society |
|--|
| Building Committee |
| Music Committee |
| Nominating Committee Mr. Edwin Dinwiddie, Chairman Mrs. Robert Cooper, Mrs. Curtis Lischkge |
| Sesqui-Centennial Committee |
| Constitution Revision Committee Mrs. Elmer Murray, Mr. Lester Etter, Mr. Earl Mann, Mr. Ernest Massey, Mr. Robert Parker |
| CHURCH SCHOOL OFFICERS AND TEACHERS, 1957-58 |
| Superintendent |
| Assistant Superintendent |
| Treasurer |
| Secretary |
| Assistant Secretary |
| Cradle Roll |
| Nursery No. 1 |
| Nursery Mrs. Robert Cooper, Mrs. Robert Marple, Mrs. Blaine Knight |
| Beginners |

THE CHURCH'S PRESENT OFFICERS, TEACHERS AND COMMITTEES (Cont'd)

| Primary |
|---|
| Juniors |
| Intermediate |
| High School |
| Bykota |
| Young Adults |
| Fellowship |
| Ladies' Class and Men's Class |
| Substitute Teachers |
| Dinwiddie |
| BAPTIST YOUTH FELLOWSHIP LEADERS |
| |
| BAPTIST YOUTH FELLOWSHIP LEADERS |
| BAPTIST YOUTH FELLOWSHIP LEADERS Primary |

